

Ecosophical Educating - Special Issue Editorial

Ecology is derived from the Greek word *oikos* meaning house or dwelling place and coined by German zoologist Ernst Haeckel. This home or habitat brings into balance the whole of one's being. One's home is a place to be cultivating identity, beliefs, values, and appreciations. Places of learning might also be harmonious with this sort of cultivation or *Bildung*. Philosophy (*philosophia*) from the Greek *philo* meaning loving and *sophia* meaning wisdom is often aligned more with a system of thought or beliefs than its derivation suggests. Understanding philosophy as the love of wisdom brings to light notions of affection, adoration, and devotion to knowledge and experience. In this sense a philosophy requires attachment and commitment within one's constitution rather than a system developed through a set of fundamental principles.

Ecosophy may be envisaged as fusing the love of wisdom with the dwelling place or home.

Classrooms, in the broadest sense, are milieus where notions of ecosophy can be played out intellectually, aesthetically, phenomenologically, spiritually (transpersonal ecology), and politically through the sensing body. Wisdom is encountered via harmonious equilibrium where one realizes his or her full potential and acts in a socially responsive and responsible way. This cultivation or self-cultivation is augmented through liberatory practices of freedom where ecological resistance is commonplace and ecological wisdom is fostered. This ecological wisdom allows one to question ways of being which exploit the natural world.

In this special issue we deliberate ideas, reflections and forethoughts about Ecosophical Educating as a means of encountering the learning place as a dwelling where educators and students seek ecological wisdom. Drawing on Naess' notion of ecosophy as a philosophy of ecological equilibrium, ecosophical pedagogy engages with the both precarious and secure characteristics of wisdom and home. Whilst the deep ecologist might hope to influence political and social change, the responsive educator creates a space for learners to consider multiple ways of being in the world and generate possibilities about whether and when to act.

In *Educating Seth: An Ecosophical Conversation* we begin to question, "What knowledge is of most worth?" As we enter a dialogue of ecosophical educating in mathematics we further query whether or not wisdom or the love of it can be taught. Sawada and Kentel deliberate a scenario of what fusing

the love of wisdom with the dwelling place might resemble within the walls of the traditional classroom, albeit recognizing that we may indeed be imagining the impossible.

Blenkinsop and Beeman provide narrative and poetic accounts of co-teaching with ecological sensibility. Drawing on the notions of Othuw (the other-than-human world) and Mothuw (more than human) they prompt us to consider and reconsider what it means to be teacher. They suggest that in order to learn with and be taught by the other-than-human world one must interact with it. Immersing oneself in this being in, being with, and being educated by the world might cause one to wonder if one can ever really be alone.

Through three personal narratives, Brown explores and interrogates her pedagogical journey of educating ecosophically. She tackles the challenges of disrupting confining approaches to schooling and reveals the necessity to assert some form of institutional resistance in order to fuse the love of wisdom with the dwelling place. As she takes her students through a walk in the forest she knows her “role is an important one”. An important one indeed.

Snowberry and Blenkinsop invite us on a journey through the school: a school where knowledge is something dormant rather than living; a school where trees are thrust to the periphery of understanding and discussed as though we humans are somehow privileged knowers of all things living in the world; a school that stifles imaginations and celebrates the static body. Engendering a pedagogy of hope; however, the authors provide a counter-narrative to the wisdom as attainment scenario so often encountered in schooling. They envisage an ecosophical way of educating, which provokes one to ponder, “Why are those leaves red?”

Thompson provokes us to Take a Walk on the Wild Side in considering a pedagogical response to environmental ethics. He briefly outlines the major tenets of Light’s environmental pragmatism calling readers to engage students in a practice of ecological citizenship. Drawing from a range of theorists Thompson argues that one must “recognize the wild nature that is already within one’s self” and provides beginning examples to bring this awareness into being.

Tarantulas in the Freezer is a thoughtful narrative inviting readers to a world of ecosophy in motion. Here Kesson teases out ways in which wisdom is bred in and spawned from the home. She further raises a number of ethical dilemmas encountered when engaging with ecosophical educating and realizing a living curriculum. Akin to Blenkinsop and Beeman she reminds us that in order to fully appreciate the natural world we must spend time in it.

This holds true not only for this generation but also for generations to come. As the Native American proverb foretells, “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children”.

Karrow invites readers to his personal dwelling place, the place he calls home; the place he is educated. In exploring the inhabitable he reveals the struggles of traversing through the swamp characterizing it as neither land nor water and challenging to navigate. Through this vignette he begins to theorize about liminality through an ecophenomenological lens. His thoughtful enquiry causes readers to metaphorically, ecosophically, and educationally consider whether or not the swamp is indeed a place to dwell in.

This anthology is diverse yet has an elemental focus upon the fusion of wisdom and love in ecosophical educating. In harmony with *The Trumpeter's* dedication to the development of ecosophy these papers are rhizomatic representations of intuiting deep ecology in a range of educational milieus. As well they characterize a pedagogical environmental ethic from an array of vantage points allowing readers to ponder, draw from, set aside, or move forward diverse thoughts about Ecosophical Educating.

Jeanne Adèle Kentel
Special Issue Editor